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What's Happening In Southern Europe?

A radio discussion over WGN and the Mutual Broadcasting System

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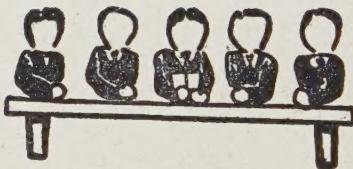
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THE REVIEWING STAND is a weekly radio forum presented by Northwestern University. The program was first broadcast by Station WGN, Chicago, October 14, 1934. It has been on the air continuously since that time, originating in the WGN studios, and, since 1935, carried by the stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System. THE REVIEWING STAND presents members of the Northwestern University faculty and distinguished guests from business, government, education, and the press in round table discussions of contemporary problems—the questions that are in the news. The program is under the direction of James H. McBurney, Dean of the School of Speech, Northwestern University; Miss Myrtle Stahl, Director of Educational Programs, WGN, Chicago; R. E. Buchanan, Director of Radio, Northwestern University; Mrs. Kathryn Johnson, Assistant to the Director; Mrs. Mary Clark, Secretarial Chief.

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What's Happening In Southern Europe?

MR. BUCHANAN: What's happening in Southern Europe?

MR. HART: I feel strongly that a real regeneration has set in in Italy, that a new spirit has entered the people, and that if the Marshall Plan is carried out it will defeat communism in that country.

MR. DUNNER: If the Marshall Plan does serve to defeat communism, it will also defeat fascism, which in my estimation is a very important point.

MR. FIELDING: As I see it, there are certain developments in the making in Southern Europe which are both favorable and unfavorable to the democratic cause in the cold war with Soviet Russia.

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MR. BUCHANAN: The election of President Truman has created much comment abroad, as well as at home. The European nations, it seems to me, look to the election as a sort of forecast of their future, for United States foreign policy may determine their future.

And, one of the most important areas in Europe is the southern part of the continent, harboring strategic points in France, Italy, Greece, the Balkans—all key points in the struggle between Russia and the Western Powers.

Now, gentlemen, I know that all three of you have been in Europe and know the situation well. Where did you travel and what general observations did you make, Mr. Hart?

Conditions in Southern Europe Have Improved

MR. HART: I returned to Europe to make a special study of the Italian election and spent several weeks there before, during, and after the election period. And from there I went to Switzerland, France, Belgium, Holland, and England.

MR. BUCHANAN: What conditions in general did you find?

MR. HART: Improved over what I had found there in 1938, just before the war.

MR. BUCHANAN: And, Mr. Dunner, where did you travel?

MR. DUNNER: After having lived most of my life in Europe until Hitler came to power in 1933, and after returning to Europe as military government officer in the United States forces from 1945 to 1946, I went back to Europe this past summer to revisit Britain, France, Switzerland, and Italy.

MR. BUCHANAN: And what did you think of conditions there?

MR. DUNNER: In those countries I think conditions have greatly improved. The Marshall Plan definitely works.

MR. BUCHANAN: Captain Fielding, what has been your experience?

MR. FIELDING: In line with my annual summer expedition to various parts of the world I visited the major Marshall Plan countries and climaxed the visit with a personal penetration behind the Iron Curtain into Yugoslavia. I found that the Marshall Plan has acted as a tremendous morale

booster in the two key countries of Western Europe—France and Italy. And it has, at least for the time being, put a stop to the Red march across Western Europe.

MR. BUCHANAN: Let us look at France. Why do you think that country is so important?

MR. FIELDING: France and Italy are unquestionably the keys to Western Europe. If the Russians were to gain domination in France and/or Italy, I think our chances of holding Western Europe would be very, very slim. These countries are strategically located.

MR. BUCHANAN: What do you think is happening in France, Mr. Dunner?

MR. DUNNER: There has been a movement toward two extremes: the communists on the one side, the de Gaulle forces on the other. But with the Marshall Plan aid there is a chance to maintain the middle-of-the-road parties. And the last elections in October proved that these middle-of-the-road parties have gained strength again.

MR. FIELDING: However, Mr. Dunner, I think you have to admit that there are conditions building up in France today which are extremely dangerous. I see conditions which remind me too much, unfortunately, of conditions in Germany prior to the advent of Hitler. I see the population splitting into two major groups: communist and anti-communist, which, of course, was precisely the kind of situation we had in Germany, the kind of situation which produced a Hitler. To that extent I think the development in France is very dangerous.

MR. HART: What about the middle class in France?

'Middle Class Gets Squeeze'

MR. FIELDING: I think the middle class in France is going to be squeezed if de Gaulle comes to power. For instance, I don't see de Gaulle as a Hitler—don't get me wrong—but if de Gaulle does come to power you are going to have the two extremes and in that situation the middle class—or what might be termed the democratic class—is usually squeezed badly.

MR. DUNNER: I would perhaps identify de Gaulle as the Hindenburg of France, and while de Gaulle cannot be considered as a dangerous personality, the danger of the de Gaulle movement is that we do not know the forces being engendered within it.

MR. FIELDING: Well, of course, if you agree that de Gaulle represents the Hindenburg of Germany, then you must admit that there is this definite danger of somebody emerging, some potential Hitler emerging in France from, let's say, the ineffectiveness of de Gaulle in his efforts to meet this particular problem.

MR. DUNNER: That is why I say the Marshall Plan has a very definite function in France. If the Marshall Plan with all its potential and economic implications succeeds in stimulating France, then the Hindenburg trend might be averted.

MR. FIELDING: That is perfectly right, Mr. Dunner. If the Marshall Plan succeeds in defeating communism, then there will be less need for what might be termed a strong anti-communist line.

MR. DUNNER: That's right.

MR. HART: Do you feel, Captain Fielding, that the present government in France is strong enough to carry through?

MR. FIELDING: I do not. I think the present government of France is in the position of the bellicose but very ardent husband who finds that he can't live with his wife and he can't live without her. In other words, here you have a very strong party, the Communist Party in France, which is not permitted representation in the government. And I think France's troubles are due to the fact that this very strong party has no representation. It is always on the outside trying to undermine whatever government is in power.

MR. DUNNER: As far as de Gaulle is concerned, we often overlook the fact that his men are on the regional councils of France and have a very strong and important voice in local and provincial government at least. I would be inclined to accept de Gaulle in the present national government of France, but my point as to France is that the middle-of-the-road parties will have to think again about the whole constitutional setup which prevents a strong executive, the type of strong executive de Gaulle wanted. And I think as to that, de Gaulle has a point.

MR. FIELDING: Yes, but how is France going to do business as a government if she persists in keeping the communists out of power? Of course, we know today that under our Marshall Plan provisions any country that permits representation by communists is almost "on the outs" with our own people. But, at the same time, what are you going to do with a party which represents one-third of all Frenchmen?

MR. HART: The communists want control of the Ministry of Interior, they want control of the police and the army, and then good-by, democratic government.

Should Communists Have Representation?

MR. FIELDING: That is perfectly right, but I still ask the question: How is a government going to operate when a party representing one-third of the people is barred from representation in the government?

MR. DUNNER: I would say this, as Mr. Hart has just suggested, the transfer of the police and the army to the communists would, of course, mean the end of French democracy. And I personally am inclined, in view of my experiences in Germany, to say that a party that has only one plan, namely to undermine the existing democracy of a country by using its political and personal liberties, should be barred by the remainder of the population. In other words, two-thirds of French population is, in my opinion, entitled to keep the communists out of power. Czechoslovakia is a good example. There the one-third actually succeeded in gaining and seizing power by getting the key positions in the government.

MR. FIELDING: Of course that always has been the communist line: to gain control of the police and army and then take over. But I still think if we are going to talk democracy in France, it is going to be very hard to square that claim with the barring of the party which represents one-third of the entire population.

MR. HART: That has happened in Italy, Captain Fielding. There was a

30 per cent communist vote in the last election. The communists have been kept very effectively out of the government in Italy.

MR. FIELDING: That is very right, Mr. Hart, but don't forget the communist problem in Italy is by no means over as yet.

MR. HART: I realize that.

MR. BUCHANAN: What of economic conditions in France? Is industry improving, and how is agriculture getting along there, Mr. Dunner?

MR. DUNNER: I think they both are better off today than they were in 1945 or 1946. The agriculture sector is working; industry has also recovered to a large extent.

The coal strike is actually the third large attempt, I believe that you might say, of the communists to destroy the Marshall Plan. We have the Berlin crisis along the same line and various movements of the communists in Italy. But I think that the coal strike can be properly handled if the government of France is willing to use its present powers to, on the one hand, give the miners the necessary boost in wages and, on the other hand, destroy the communist centers in these mining areas.

MR. FIELDING: I am wondering whether the real purpose of the strike is to obtain wages. Of course, I know that is what they say, but if this is communist instigated, I doubt very much if the communists are going to permit themselves to be called off by a boost in wages.

'Low Wages Promote Strike'

MR. DUNNER: Captain Fielding, the tragedy is that the workers have a very low wage compared to the cost of living. And therefore the communists are so able to arouse the workers to this strike. There should be a two-fold policy: (1) to take care of the real need of the working class in the mining area, and (2) to get rid of the communist-instigators of political strikes.

MR. FIELDING: I think we are all agreed then that if the Marshall Plan works, if it achieves its purpose of bringing about economic stability in France, that you are going to defeat your communist menace to a large extent.

MR. BUCHANAN: Mr. Hart, you have said you see certain similarities between France and Italy, especially with relation to communism. What is the situation in Italy now after the election?

MR. HART: The government has made certain promises that it hasn't begun to carry out, and if the de Gasperi government doesn't soon begin these land reforms and doesn't carry out some of its promises, I am afraid that communist troubles will start again in Italy. The de Gasperi government has not begun to do those things and the people are beginning to ask questions. There is more inflation in Italy than there was, and things are a little more difficult. With the elections over I feel that the Italian people are well set on the way toward real democracy.

MR. FIELDING: There is one very bright light in this entire Italian picture, as I see it. As you know, Mr. Hart, the communists polled about 8 million votes in that recent election. However, there is a tendency more recently for a break to develop in the National Federation of Labor. As you know, the Catholic Labor groups as represented by the so-called A. C. L. I. are very

definitely anti-communist. To that extent I think we see here a very definite break in communist party lines.

MR. DUNNER: I think we should never forget that Italy is overpopulated. Except for the Po valley there is very little industry, and the agriculture of Italy is not too successful. Italy throughout modern times has had a surplus population that had to emigrate to other countries. If you remember, from 1860 to 1905 some 8 million Italians had to leave their country. Neither the fascist Italy nor the Italy of today can cope with the population problem unless a very great effort is made by all the Western nations to assist Italy in a recovery of her economy and in taking care of her surplus population.

MR. HART: You are right, Mr. Dunner. At the present time Italy has an overpopulation of about 8 million. There are 2 million unemployed, and there is an increasing population of 400,000 a year. Can the Italian colonies absorb those people? I personally believe they cannot. Another question is whether the Western nations can absorb them. Except for the Argentine I don't see that the Western nations have made a very definite move to absorb these people. Italy cannot survive if she continues her over-population.

Italy Must Have Coal

MR. DUNNER: It is very important for Italy to get coal. As you know Italy is deficient in fuels. She has no coal. She has some hydro-electric power in the north. If, for instance, the Marshall Plan should succeed in Western Germany, then part of the Western European coal could be diverted to Italy, and in turn assist the Italian industries.

MR. BUCHANAN: What is the general situation among the people there, especially with regard to communism? Did the attempted assassination of Togliatti have a great effect?

MR. DUNNER: I was in Italy at the time, and of course I tried to find the reasons for that attempt on Togliatti. I came to the conclusion that this attempt was made by communists because the communists alone had an interest in making a martyr of Togliatti. The Communist Party had suffered during the elections in April, 1948, as we all know. The Communist Party had suffered tremendously in Italy because of what happened in Tito's Yugoslavia. The great hero, Tito—hero to the communists of Italy—suddenly had become a traitor to the communists in Italy and Moscow. And now the communists had to recapture some of the prestige. Therefore they tried to make a martyr of Togliatti.

MR. FIELDING: I, too, was in Italy at the time of the attempted assassination of Togliatti, and whether or not that assassination was instigated by Moscow, I think you will agree with me, Mr. Dunner, that the kick-back was very definitely against the communists. Most of the Italians felt that it was instigated by Moscow or by communist agents to bring about a situation which they thought would play into their hands. The very opposite was true.

MR. HART: Wasn't that one of the very cleverest moves of the de Gasperi group after the assassination—a move to throw out troops, to get the country prepared and to let the country realize what had happened?

MR. FIELDING: Of course that is one of the things, I think, in favor of the de Gasperi government. The government has a sufficiently large and

loyal police force to handle any internal trouble. At the present time their police force is somewhere around 300,000, and that in turn is boosted by 75,000 *carabinieri* upon whom the government can count.

MR. HART: For a while the strike which was organized by the Communist Party and by Nenni Socialists seemed to be very successful. I saw practically all the railroad workers on strike, all transportation workers, and most of the industries. But I think the de Gasperi government handled the situation very well.

Nenni and Communist Front

MR. HART: Don't you feel that Nenni and his group have left the communist front definitely?

MR. DUNNER: No, I don't think so as yet. Nenni tried some sort of a coalition. He has become a prisoner of the Communist Party. You must not forget the old Giacomo Matteotti, assassinated by the fascists, as you probably remember. That party was split, and we have today two socialist parties, one under Saragat.

MR. FIELDING: The rightest party?

MR. DUNNER: Saragat may be called rightist as far as I am concerned. I consider communism left. As far as I am concerned I say the socialists are reactionary, so from my point they are right.

MR. HART: Doesn't that split weaken the communists?

MR. DUNNER: No, the leftist Socialist Party under Nenni is still in a coalition with the communists. I have a hunch that Nenni would try desperately now to get out of this coalition, but the question is whether his friends on the so-called right—I would say on the left . . . that is Saragat and the others—are willing to accept him back.

MR. BUCHANAN: What is the general situation in Italy? Do you think the Marshall Plan will succeed there, Mr. Hart?

MR. HART: I feel that it will.

MR. BUCHANAN: I was interested, too, in your mention, Mr. Dunner, of Tito. I know Captain Fielding that you went into Yugoslavia this summer. What did you find about Tito and his regime behind the iron curtain?

MR. FIELDING: It seems to me there are two considerations which must play a large part in Russian thinking when the Kremlin starts to contemplate the chances of a third world war. The first is that Russia is not yet industrially prepared for a world war. And even more important still there is growing unrest among Russia's satellite areas behind the iron curtain.

I went into Yugoslavia to find out principally what was back of the split between Tito and Stalin, and I found that actually there was no tendency, as some of our commentators have been telling us, for Tito to reorient his political thinking from East to West.

MR. BUCHANAN: You mean he hasn't come over to our view?

MR. FIELDING: Not at all. That is just plain nonsense. In fact I have definite proof that Tito is an unregenerate Trotsky-ite. And the present fight between Tito and Stalin is the old Trotsky fight.

MR. HART: How long do you think, Captain Fielding, that Tito can last?

MR. FIELDING: I know of three assassination attempts against Tito. I brought the actual proof from behind the iron curtain on two of them. The proof was considered so important that the British Foreign Office in London wanted details. There is no question in my mind that Tito is going to be assassinated. When, of course, remains for time to tell. When that assassination takes place there is liable to be chaos inside Yugoslavia. The Russian Red Army may have to occupy Yugoslavia, and that may give us a chance to exploit that situation to our advantage in the cold war.

Intervention in Yugoslavia?

MR. BUCHANAN: How would we go about exploiting that situation?

MR. FIELDING: It may have to be in the form of direct physical intervention inside Yugoslavia.

MR. HART: You mean war?

MR. FIELDING: No, I do not mean war.

MR. HART: You say direct physical intervention.

MR. FIELDING: Direct intervention would not necessarily mean war. There are such things as limited operations. In other words, there is a war going on in Greece at the present time; that doesn't mean a global war.

MR. BUCHANAN: What about the situation in Palestine?

MR. HART: Well, is Palestine Southern Europe?

MR. FIELDING: Palestine isn't Southern Europe, but it will, of course, have a very important bearing on the Eastern Mediterranean situation. To that extent I don't think you can ignore the trouble in Palestine at the present time. It seems to me that this fight between Arabs and Zionists is playing right into Russia's hands. If the Russians get a foothold directly or indirectly in Palestine, they have achieved access to the East Mediterranean, which, of course, has been their purpose in the Eastern Mediterranean through the Dardanelles, a purpose which we thought we were going to thwart through the Truman doctrine in Greece and Turkey.

MR. DUNNER: I am very much in favor of the Truman Doctrine, as I said before, but I believe we should not forget that Mr. Bevin and, partly, our own State Department could have played their cards a little better in the Palestine situation. I am convinced that the state of Israel is the only western and democratic state in the entire Middle East, and that we should support it rather than an old Arab effendi class that is treacherous, that has first worked with the Nazis and would probably work with the Russians. In my estimation, our American policy should be directed toward the support of Israel rather than the Arabs.

MR. FIELDING: Anybody who says that the Arabs might play with Soviet Russia just doesn't know Arabs. The whole Arab point of view is absolutely opposed to communism. If you say the Arabs play with fascists, yes, but not with communists.

MR. DUNNER: Captain Fielding, we have some proof in this matter. Some of the leading leaders of the Arab League have actually threatened to work with Soviet Russia should Britain and the United States go on supporting the state of Israel. But whatever that may be, I insist that the state of Israel is the only democratic bulwark in this whole Middle East.

MR. FIELDING: And you can't get away from the fact that the Arabs live there, too, and that territory has been an historic Arab land for thousands of years.

MR. HART: What is the solution?

MR. FIELDING: If I knew the solution I would apply to become the next Secretary of State, I think.

'Stabilize Frontiers of Israel'

MR. DUNNER: Then I make this application. (Laughter.) I want to stabilize the state of Israel within the frontiers drawn tentatively in November, 1947. I want to make sure that both Arabs and Jews consider these frontiers permanent.

MR. FIELDING: You will have to sell that to the Arabs, of course.

MR. DUNNER: We will have to sell it to the Arabs.

MR. HART: Don't you have to sell it to the Russians, too?

MR. DUNNER: I am convinced that Ibn Saud will accept any "selling" by the United States.

MR. HART: If money goes along with it.

MR. FIELDING: It isn't what Ibn Saud accepts; it is what the King of Trans-Jordan accepts.

MR. DUNNER: I think the King of Trans-Jordan, who is a puppet of Mr. Bevin, will accept anything that the British tell him to accept.

MR. HART: It is that or lose his job, isn't it?

MR. FIELDING: I am silent.

MR. DUNNER: I want to make sure that I prefer the state of Israel to a king of Trans-Jordan with his harems and old feudal traditions.

MR. HART: Do you object to harems, Mr. Dunner? (Laughter.)

MR. FIELDING: Now really that doesn't belong here. In any case I believe there is a little bit of axe-grinding going on.

MR. BUCHANAN: What is the general situation, Mr. Hart, in Southern Europe regarding our struggle against Russia in this cold war?

MR. HART: I feel we are gaining definitely.

MR. FIELDING: I feel we are gaining, too, but I think it would be a great mistake not to take into account the fact that we might still lose.

MR. BUCHANAN: And what do you think would bring about such a loss?

MR. FIELDING: Blundering in such strategic areas as the Eastern Mediterranean, in Italy, France, etc.

MR. DUNNER: I think the great hope of all Europeans is the unity of Europe, a United States of Europe, as the real third force between the United States and Soviet Russia. Such a unity will also make it possible for the Italians and for all Southern European nations to live a new life in this world.

Suggested Readings

*Compiled by the Reference Department,
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Christian Science Monitor Magazine. p. 2, Sept. 25, '48. "Stalin's Balkan Dilemma; Yugoslavian Resistance to Soviet Reins." R. E. DUPUY.

Yugoslavian resistance to the Soviet reins seems to offer some insurance against further Russian invasion in the Balkans.

Foreign Affairs. 26:701-708, Jly., '48. "Favorable Omens in Italy." VITTORIO IVELLA.

Analysis of present political organizations, the recent election, and postwar programs in Italy.

Life. 25:24-31, Jl. 12, '48. "Three Weeks in Tito's Yugoslavia."

Denounced by the Cominform, Yugoslavia remains a communist state with a communist leader who also happens to be a nationalist.

New Statesman and Nation. 36:107-08, Ag. 7, '48: Discussion 36:134, Ag. 14, '48. "Report on Greece; Maladministration and Economic Distress Are the Causes of the Growth of Communism." K. SPENCER.

Causes for Greek civil strife lie in Greece herself and, according to at least one Greek, in Russian desires for an outlet to the Mediterranean. Spencer pleads for a truce to assist in the establishment of a new and really democratic government.

Nineteenth Century and After. 143:324-30, Je., '48. "The Problem of Political Reform in France." HUMBERT MICHAUD, tr. by GERARD HOPKINS.

The French people do not know what they want from government and this uncertainty is preventing the birth of a political system in tune with the French national character.

Nineteenth Century and After. 144:20-26, Je., '48. "The Third Force in Italy." RICHARD GOOLD-ADAMS.

Summarized the strength of the third force in Italian politics—made up of whatever parties stand in between the Christian Democrats and the Popular Front.

POLLACK, JAMES KERR, ed. *Change and Crisis in European Government.* New York, Rinehart, 1948.

Political and constitutional developments in European countries.

ROUSEK, JOSEPH S. *Balkan Politics.* Stanford University, Stanford University Press, 1948.

Surveys the contemporary scene from the American point of view.

SMOTHERS, FRANK and WILLIAM and ELIZABETH McNEILL. *Reports on the Greeks.* New York, The Twentieth Century Fund, 1948.

A very dark report of political and economic conditions in Greece.

U. S. News. 25:13-14, Ag. 27, '48. "What Tito-Stalin Rift Reveals."

Rift exposes sore spots in Soviet system and weakens Moscow's "cold war" offensive.

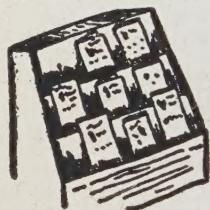
U. S. News. 25:13, Sept. 10, '48. "Why French Cabinets Fall."

Basic reason for instability of French Cabinets lies in the constitution. Opponents can throw out the "ins" but lack the strength to take over.

World Affairs. (London) ns 2:284-95, Jl., '48. "Italy After the Elections."

K. M. SMOGORZEWSKI.

Analysis of the Italian election in April pointing out that the Italian people were voting for economic aid from the U. S. and for an Italian government rather than one dominated by the Kremlin, asserting that the danger has not passed.



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